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TO AUTUMN

JOHN KEATS.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness!
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen Thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;

Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twinèd flowers;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,--
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

Project Gutenberg's *The Cambridge Book of Poetry for Children*, by Various

OLD FAIRINGDOWN

Project Gutenberg's *Path Flower and Other Verses*, by Olive T. Dargan

Soft as a treader on mosses
I go through the village that sleeps;
The village too early abed,
For the night still shuffles, a gipsy,
In the woods of the east,
And the west remembers the sun.

Not all are asleep; there are faces
That lean from the walls of the gardens;
Look sharply, or you will not see them,
Or think them another stone in the wall.
I spoke to a stone, and it answered
Like an aged rock that crumbles;
Each falling piece was a word.
"Five have I buried," it said,
"And seven are over the sea."

Here is a hut that I pass,

So lowly it has no brow,
And dwarfs sit within at a table.
A boy waits apart by the hearth;
On his face the patience of firelight,
But his eyes seek the door and a far world.
It is not the call to the table he waits,
But the call of the sea-rimmed forests,
And cities that stir in a dream.
I haste by the low-browed door,
Lest my arms go in and betray me,
A mother jealously passing.
He will go, the pale dwarf, and walk tall among giants;
The child with his eyes on the far land,
And fame like a young, curled leaf in his heart.

The stream that darts from the hanging hill
Like a silver wing that must sing as it flies,
Is folded and still on the breast
Of the village that sleeps.
Each mute, old house is more old than the other,
And each wears its vines like ragged hair
Round the half-blind windows.
If a child should laugh, if a girl should sing,
Would the houses rub the vines from their eyes,
And listen and live?
A voice comes now from a cottage,
A voice that is young and must sing,
A honeyed stab on the air,
And the houses do not wake.

I look through the leaf-blowzed window,
And start as a gazer who, passing a death-vault,
Sees life sitting hopeful within.
She is young, but a woman, round-breasted,
Waiting the peril of Eve;
And she makes the shadows about her sweet
As the glooms that play in a pine-wood.
She sits at a harpsichord (old as the walls are),
And longing flows in the trickling, fairy notes
Like a hidden brook in a forest
Seeking and seeking the sun.

I have watched a young tree on the edge of a wood
When the mist is weaving and drifting.
Slowly the boughs disappear and the leaves reach out
Like the drowning hands of children,
Till a grey blur quivers cold
Where the green grace drank of the sun.
So now, as I gaze, the morrows

Creep weaving and winding their mist
Round the beauty of her who sings.
They hide the soft rings of her hair,
Dear as a child's curling fingers;
They shut out the trembling sun of eyes
That are deep as a bending mother's;
And her bridal body is scarfed with their chill.

For old and old is the story;
Over and over I listen to murmurs
That are always the same in these towns that sleep;
Where grey and unwed a woman passes,
Her cramped, drab gown the bounds of a world
She holds with grief and silence;
And a gossip whose tongue alone is unwithered
Mumbles the tale by her affable gate;
How the lad must go, and the girl must stay,
Singing alone to the years and a dream;
Then a letter, a rumour, a word
From the land that reaches for lovers
And gives them not back;
And the maiden looks up with a face that is old;
Her smile, as her body, is evermore barren,
Her cheek like the bark of the beech-tree
Where climbs the grey winter.

Now have I seen her young,
The lone girl singing,
With the full round breast and the berry lip,
And heart that runs to a dawn-rise
On new-world mountains.
The weeping ash in the dooryard
Gathers the song in its boughs,
And the gown of dawn she will never wear.
I can listen no more; good-bye, little town, old Fairingdown.
I climb the long, dark hillside,
But the ache I have found here I cannot outclimb.
O Heart, if we had not heard, if we did not know
There is that in the village that never will sleep!

ESCAPE

by William A. Norris

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They danced beneath the stars, a crazy rout
With antic steps that had some little grace;

And one leapt high with song and frenzied shout,
And one ran silent with a gleaming face.

They danced until the shy moon looking down
Deemed herself lost above some Grecian glade;
A mile away the trim New England town
Echoed the Bacchanalian din they made.

And still they danced, until the moon sank low,
Blushing a little, and night's diadem
Of stars grew pale before the eastern glow....
And with the dawn their keepers came for them.

PICCADILLY CIRCUS AT NIGHT

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Street-Walkers.

WHEN into the night the yellow light is roused like
dust above the towns,
Or like a mist the moon has kissed from off a pool in
the midst of the downs,

Our faces flower for a little hour pale and uncertain
along the street,
Daisies that waken all mistaken white-spread in ex-
pectancy to meet

The luminous mist which the poor things wist was
dawn arriving across the sky,
When dawn is far behind the star the dust-lit town
has driven so high.

All the birds are folded in a silent ball of sleep,
All the flowers are faded from the asphalt isle in
the sea,
Only we hard-faced creatures go round and round,
and keep
The shores of this innermost ocean alive and
illusory.

Wanton sparrows that twittered when morning
looked in at their eyes
And the Cyprian's pavement-roses are gone, and
now it is we
Flowers of illusion who shine in our gauds, make a

Paradise
On the shores of this ceaseless ocean, gay birds of
the town-dark sea.

THE FACE UPON THE FLOOR

by H. Antoine D'Arcy._

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'Twas a balmy summer evening, and a goodly crowd was there,
Which well-nigh filled Joe's bar-room on the corner of the square;
And as songs and witty stories came through the open door,
A vagabond crept slowly in and posed upon the floor.

"Where did it come from?" someone said. "The wind has blown it in."
"What does it want?" another cried. "Some whisky, rum or gin?"
"Here, Toby, seek him, if your stomach's equal to the work--
I wouldn't touch him with a fork, he's as filthy as a Turk."

This badinage the poor wretch took with stoical, good grace;
In fact, he smiled as though he thought he'd struck the proper place.
"Come, boys, I know there's kindly hearts among so good a crowd--
To be in such good company would make a deacon proud.

"Give me a drink--that's what I want--I'm out of funds, you know;
When I had cash to treat the gang, this hand was never slow.
What? You laugh as though you thought this pocket never held a sou;
I once was fixed as well, my boys, as any one of you.

"There, thanks; that's braced me nicely; God bless you one and all;
Next time I pass this good saloon, I'll make another call.
_ Give you a song? _ No, I can't do that, my singing days are past;
My voice is cracked, my throat's worn out, and my lungs are going fast.

"Say! give me another whisky, and I'll tell you what I'll do--
I'll tell you a funny story, and a fact, I promise, too.
That I was ever a decent man, not one of you would think;
But I was, some four or five years back. Say, give me another drink.

"Fill her up, Joe, I want to put some life into my frame--
Such little drinks, to a bum like me, are miserably tame;
Five fingers--there, that's the scheme--and corking whisky, too.
Well, here's luck, boys; and landlord, my best regards to you.

"You've treated me pretty kindly, and I'd like to tell you how

I came to be the dirty sot you see before you now.
As I told you, once I was a man, with muscle, frame and health,
And but for a blunder, ought to have made considerable wealth.

"I was a painter--not one that daubed on bricks and wood,
But an artist, and, for my age, was rated pretty good.
I worked hard at my canvas, and was bidding fair to rise,
For gradually I saw the star of fame before my eyes.

"I made a picture, perhaps you've seen, 'tis called the 'Chase of Fame.'
It brought me fifteen hundred pounds, and added to my name.
And then I met a woman--now comes the funny part--
With eyes that petrified my brain and sunk into my heart.

"Why don't you laugh? 'Tis funny that the vagabond you see
Could ever love a woman, and expect her love for me;
But 'twas so, and for a month or two her smiles were freely given,
And when her loving lips touched mine it carried me to heaven.

"Did you ever see a woman for whom your soul you'd give,
With a form like the Milo Venus, too beautiful to live;
With eyes that would beat the Koh-i-noor, and a wealth of chestnut hair?
If so, 'twas she, for there never was another half so fair.

"I was working on a portrait, one afternoon in May,
Of a fair-haired boy, a friend of mine, who lived across the way;
And Madeline admired it, and, much to my surprise,
Said that she'd like to know the man that had such dreamy eyes.

"It didn't take long to know him, and before the month had flown,
My friend had stolen my darling, and I was left alone;
And ere a year of misery had passed above my head,
The jewel I had treasured so had tarnished, and was dead.

"That's why I took to drink, boys. Why, I never saw you smile,--
I thought you'd be amused, and laughing all the while.
Why, what's the matter, friend? There's a teardrop in your eye,
Come, laugh, like me; 'tis only babes and women that should cry.

"Say, boys, if you give me just another whisky, I'll be glad,
And I'll draw right here a picture of the face that drove me mad.
Give me that piece of chalk with which you mark the baseball score--
You shall see the lovely Madeline upon the bar-room floor."

Another drink, and, with chalk in hand, the vagabond began
To sketch a face that well might buy the soul of any man.
Then as he placed another lock upon the shapely head,
With a fearful shriek, he leaped, and fell across the picture dead.

THE NEW DAY

by Fenton Johnson

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Book of American Negro Poetry*

Edited by James Weldon Johnson

From a vision red with war I awoke and saw the Prince
of Peace hovering over No Man's Land.
Loud the whistles blew and the thunder of cannon was
drowned by the happy shouting of the people.
From the Sinai that faces Armageddon I heard this chant
from the throats of white-robed angels:

Blow your trumpets, little children!
From the East and from the West,
From the cities in the valley,
From God's dwelling on the mountain,
Blow your blast that Peace might know
She is Queen of God's great army.
With the crying blood of millions
We have written deep her name
In the Book of all the Ages;
With the lilies in the valley,
With the roses by the Mersey,
With the golden flower of Jersey
We have crowned her smooth young temples.
Where her footsteps cease to falter
Golden grain will greet the morning,
Where her chariot descends
Shall be broken down the altars
Of the gods of dark disturbance.
Nevermore shall men know suffering,
Nevermore shall women wailing
Shake to grief the God of Heaven.
From the East and from the West,
From the cities in the valley,
From God's dwelling on the mountain,
Little children, blow your trumpets!

From Ethiopia, groaning 'neath her heavy burdens, I
heard the music of the old slave songs.
I heard the wail of warriors, dusk brown, who grimly
fought the fight of others in the trenches of Mars.
I heard the plea of blood-stained men of dusk and the
crimson in my veins leapt furiously.

Forget not, O my brothers, how we fought
In No Man's Land that peace might come again!
Forget not, O my brothers, how we gave
Red blood to save the freedom of the world!
We were not free, our tawny hands were tied;
But Belgium's plight and Serbia's woes we shared
Each rise of sun or setting of the moon.
So when the bugle blast had called us forth
We went not like the surly brute of yore
But, as the Spartan, proud to give the world
The freedom that we never knew nor shared.
These chains, O brothers mine, have weighed us down
As Samson in the temple of the gods;
Unloosen them and let us breathe the air
That makes the goldenrod the flower of Christ.
For we have been with thee in No Man's Land,
Through lake of fire and down to Hell itself;
And now we ask of thee our liberty,
Our freedom in the land of Stars and Stripes.

I am glad that the Prince of Peace is hovering over No Man's Land.

AN EVEN PSALM

Project Gutenberg's *'Twixt Earth and Stars*, by Marguerite Radclyffe-Hall

With silent feet all wet with dew,
Comes evening full of soft repose,
To kiss the valley deep and blue,
With wistful lips, and eyes that close.

Her breath is soft, and full of peace,
Her arms outstretchéd to caress
Fling benedictions without cease,
She seems a spirit borne to bless.

And as the evening to the earth,
Came love to me, a boon most rare;
Hushed every sorrow at its birth,
And turned complaining into prayer.

LENORE

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AH broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown forever!
Let the bell toll!--a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river;
And, Guy De Vere, hast _thou_ no tear?--weep now or never more!
See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!
Come! let the burial rite be read--the funeral song be sung!--
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young--
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

“Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for her pride,
“And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her--that she died!
“How shall the ritual, then, be read?--the requiem how be sung
“By you--by yours, the evil eye,--by yours, the slanderous tongue
“That did to death the innocent that died, and died so young?”

Peccavimus ; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel so wrong!
The sweet Lenore hath “gone before,” with Hope, that flew beside
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been thy bride--
For her, the fair and _debonair_, that now so lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes--
The life still there, upon her hair--the death upon her eyes.

“Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I upraise,
“But waft the angel on her flight with a Paeon of old days!
“Let no bell toll!--lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed mirth,
“Should catch the note, as it doth float--up from the damned Earth.
“To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost is riven--
“From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven--
“From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King of Heaven.”

ECHOES.

T. MOORE

How sweet the answer Echo makes
To Music at night
When, roused by lute or horn, she wakes,
And far away o'er lawns and lakes
Goes answering light!

Yet Love hath echoes truer far
And far more sweet

Than e'er, beneath the moonlight's star,
Of horn or lute or soft guitar
The songs repeat.

'Tis when the sigh,--in youth sincere
And only then,
The sigh that's breathed for one to hear--
Is by that one, that only Dear
Breathed back again.

BONNIE LESLEY.
R. BURNS

O saw ye bonnie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the border?
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever;
For nature made her what she is,
And ne'er made sic anither!

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we, before thee;
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

The deil he could na scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say "I canna wrang thee!"

The Powers aboon will tent thee,
Misfortune sha' na steer thee;
Thou'rt like themselves sae lovely
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie!
That we may brag we hae a lass
There's nane again sae bonnie.

VISION.

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I had been sitting alone with books,
Till doubt was a black disease,
When I heard the cheerful shout of rooks
In the bare, prophetic trees.

Bare trees, prophetic of new birth,
You lift your branches clean and free
To be a beacon to the earth,
A flame of wrath for all to see.

And the rooks in the branches laugh and shout
To those that can hear and understand;
"Walk through the gloomy ways of doubt
With the torch of vision in your hand."

MCMXIII

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SO prodigal was I of youth,
Forgetting I was young;
I worshipped dead men for their strength,
Forgetting I was strong.

I cherished old, jejune advice;
I thought I groped for truth;
Those dead old languages I learned
When I was prodigal of youth!

Then in the sunlight stood a boy,
Outstretching either hand,
Palm upwards, cup-like, and between
The fingers trickled sand.

"Oh, why so grave" he cried to me,
"Laugh, stern lips, laugh at last!
Let wisdom come when wisdom may.

The sand is running fast."

I followed him into the sun,
And laughed as he desired,
And every day upon the grass
We play till we are tired.

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